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News Release

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Lt. Governor Kinder Presents 2008 Tour of Missouri Economic Impact Study

Annual event breaks 2007 records, race to be upped in classification

ST. JOSEPH – Lt. Governor Peter Kinder, Chairman of the Missouri Tourism Commission, joined local organizing officials in St. Joseph today to present the key findings of the 2008 Tour of Missouri Economic Impact Study.

"The 2008 Tour of Missouri was a great success," said Lt. Governor Kinder. "Despite challenging weather during many days of the competition, and a weakened national economy, we were once again able to present the largest sporting event ever held in the State of Missouri. With the help of our countless volunteers and wonderful host cities, I am proud to report that the 2008 Tour of Missouri trumped the outstanding economic impact of last year's race."

In 2007, there were nearly 368,000 spectators who watched the race. This year, there were an estimated 434,000 spectators who saw the Tour at some time during the seven stages. The total economic impact by spectators during the seven day race was \$29.8 million up from \$26.2 million in 2007.

"This year's race brought nearly \$30 million of economic impact to our state," said Lt. Governor Kinder. "I am extremely pleased with the success of this year's Tour. Though we faced very challenging weather conditions, with the remnants of Hurricane Ike passing through our state, our fan base was resilient and came out to see one of the most competitive professional cycling events ever to be held on American soil."

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During the course of the seven day event, the average out-of-state visitor spent over \$270 per day during their visit. And in planning their trip, 77% of non-Missourians said the Tour of Missouri was reason they came to spend time in Missouri. A total of 72% of spectators rated the Tour of Missouri more highly than any other professional sporting event they had attended in the previous 12 months.

The Tour of Missouri also provides the state with a unique opportunity to showcase Missouri to a global audience via streaming video on the Internet.

In 2007, the Tour's official website, www.tourofmissouri.com, received hits from visitors in 73 different countries. This year, that tally was nearly doubled with hits from 139 countries around the globe. There were also over 1,000 photo and video uploads on the Tour social networking site, www.tourofmissourifanzone.com.

Following the success of this year's race, the International Cycling Union, the sanctioning body for professional cycling, raised the ranking of the Tour of Missouri to a prestigious 2.HC ranking, making the event one of the top stage races for elite athletes around the world. This status also makes the Tour of Missouri one of only three 2.HC races in the Northern hemisphere and will help in making the race more appealing to cyclists, tourists and corporate sponsors.

The 2008 Tour of Missouri economic impact study was conducted by IFM Sports, an international leader in sports marketing and research. IFM is a global company based in Germany with their American hub based in St. Louis, MO.

IFM Sports has provided similar studies for groups such as; Major League Baseball (MLB), the International Cycling Union (UCI), the International Tennis Federation and the National Basketball Association (NBA), among many other professional sporting organizations.

Gov. Blunt and Lt. Governor Kinder led the efforts in bringing this professional sporting event to the State of Missouri. Their efforts began with the formation of a steering committee in 2005, and culminated with the inaugural Tour of Missouri professional cycling race in 2007 and the second annual race in 2008. Lt. Governor Kinder is dedicated to continuing this successful tourism event into the future.

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